

Elva M. Gabriel

TO: Michael Sweeney, Mayor

DATE: June 14, 2011

Members of the Hayward City Council:

Michael Sweeney, Barbara Halliday, Bill Quirk, Francisco Zermeno,
Marvin Peixoto, Mark Salinas

SUBJECT: Critical Cuts Affecting Hayward Municipal Band

Dear Mr. Sweeney and Members of the Hayward City Council, Hayward, CA:

I have lived in the Hayward Area for the last 25 years. I have been a resident of Alameda County for seventy-five years, and was employed by the Oakland Unified School District for 43 years. After retirement, I used some of my extra time to volunteer for H.A.R.D. and have been assisting at the Douglas Morrisson Theater as house manager since 1996. My husband, William C. Gonsalves and I have continued serving the community in numerous ways including election projects, Hayward Public Library Programs including the Videotape project of Historical Views, etc.

I realize as the economy has worsened critical cuts are necessary at all levels of government. Unfortunately, often these cuts affect our youth and elderly who are not as able to represent themselves. I wish to take a moment to express the impact that will be caused by cuts in the Hayward Municipal Band presentation calendar. This program has fostered a strong community bond between persons ranging from one to ninety. It is wonderful to witness the effect the concerts have on this community activity for young and elderly. We must take steps to save programs that encourage traditional "family outings" so our children will grow up knowing the advantage of a family outing which involves entertainment for the entire family. I am a great supporter of "the technology age" and modern innovations and entertainment, but not at the expense of important things like local libraries, community theaters and performances, and programs in schools that enable youngsters to study music, dance, and theater arts where children can learn history, language, culture, customs, and numerous skills.

As you know, when the economy worsens and local programs have less access for our senior citizens and families with limited income, our entire community suffers. The Hayward Municipal Band has been presenting outstanding concerts for years and always provides topnotch entertainment for persons who often are not able to afford to pay costly prices to enjoy a musical concert. This fact is proven when you witness the audience at Douglas Morrisson Theater and the Municipal Band Concerts.

My husband and I have personally enjoyed the wonderful presentations made by this band in a lovely park setting while our grandchildren played on the swings and ate a snack while sitting on the lawn listening to the band. It was a great introduction to a theater environment without having to keep quiet, etc. like an indoor theater.

Obviously, each of you recognizes that music is an essential element in educating our youth. Have a youngster watch a theatrical production of 1776 and then answer a few questions about John Adams or voting. Who can deny that Carousel holds in-depth answers to relationships between men and women without lecturing about gender equity.

Since Hayward is a multi-cultural, multi-lingual community, who can deny that music and song is a wonderful way to learn a language. I recently taught my great-grandson to say, "I love you." by singing Barney's song on videotape. And I will never forget taking 30 youngsters to the USSR (Soviet Union) in 1987 on the first student-exchange program, and learned that our hosts had learned to speak English by singing songs, such as; "Please Release Me, Let Me Go!". Let us never forget the power of music!!!

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